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**Holyoke Soldiers' Home Receives High Marks from Department of
Veterans Affairs**

2018 Survey Finds No Clinical Deficiencies, Falls Reduced

HOLYOKE — The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke has met every clinical standard for health and life safety in the federal Department of Veteran's Affairs 2018 clinical survey. The VA also recognized the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke's efforts to implement improvement strategies over the past year which resulted in these positive results.

The VA review team, consisting of registered nurses, social workers, life safety code inspectors and financial auditors, evaluated the long-term care facility and domiciliary on 231 standards, and concluded that the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke either "Met" or "Provisionally Met" every standard with zero clinical care and life safety deficiencies.

"The Holyoke Soldiers Home is charged with providing the highest quality services with honor and dignity to Massachusetts veterans," **said Governor Charlie Baker.**

"We are proud the Department of Veteran's Affairs recognizes the hard work Secretary Sudders, Secretary Bonner, Superintendent Walsh and their staff do every day to continually improve services for such an important group of Massachusetts residents."

"The staff at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke is focused to continuously provide high-quality health care to its residents," **said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders.** "From direct care and support staff up to management, each employee works each day to support the care and independence for our veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country and deserve dignity and respect."

Last year, Secretary Sudders assembled a team of experts in the fields of nursing home quality and falls prevention to conduct a comprehensive review of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. The team, led by Secretary of Elder Affairs Alice Bonner, a nationally recognized falls researcher, worked with staff at the Soldiers' Home to identify strategies that address fall risk factors. The Home has seen a downward trend in the rate of falls. Since January 2018, the fall rate (falls per 1000 days) has decreased from 9.8 to 5.6.

"The reduction in the rate of injurious falls indicates a real culture of quality improvement at Holyoke Soldiers' Home," **said Secretary of Elder Affairs Alice Bonner**. "This is a direct result of a singular focus on prevention by the entire community at the facility. The Soldiers' Home leadership, staff, residents, and their family members should take pride in this accomplishment as they build on their success for future efforts."

"The survey results are a true testament to the great work of the entire team at the Soldiers' Home and their continued efforts day in and day out to provide our aging veterans with the very best care," **said Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Francisco A. Ureña**. "The results are further proof of the commitment of every individual in Holyoke to continue building upon the legacy of the agency."

Founded in 1952, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke is a state-funded, fully accredited health care facility that offers veterans quality health care, hospice care, including full-time residential accommodations, an on-site dental clinic, Veterans assistance center, and a multi-service outpatient department.

"To be publicly recognized by the VA for providing superior care with honor and dignity is a tremendous source of pride for our 350 plus work force," **said Holyoke Superintendent Bennett Walsh**. "We exist because of the selfless service of our veterans, and the life-force of the Home is the staff that provides the 24/7 care for our nation's heroes."

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